

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, 12-33 and 35-56 were pending and considered. In the most recent Office Action, Claims 1-9, 12-26 and 45-56 were allowed; claims 36 and 37 were objected to but indicated to be allowable if rewritten, and claims 27-33, 35 and 38-44 were rejected. In response, claims 27 and 37 have been amended, and claim 36 has been canceled. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-9, 12-33, 35 and 37-56 remain pending. Reconsideration and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiners indication that claims 1-9, 12-26 and 45-56 have been allowed.

The Examiner indicated that claims 36 and 37 were objected to but would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. In response, claims 27 and 37 have been amended. Accordingly, Applicant is of the opinion that claims 27 and 37 are now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 27 and 37.

Specifically, claim 36 was stated by the Examiner to be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 36 depended directly from claim 27. Accordingly, claim 27 has now been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 36, and claim 36 has been cancelled. Therefore, claim 27 as amended is the same as claim 36 presented in independent form. Applicant respectfully submits that for this reason, claim 27 should be allowed.

Claim 37 has been amended to depend from claim 27. Accordingly, claim 37 should be allowed without further amendment.

Claims 27-33, 35, 40 and 42-44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,723,208 (Hansen). Claims 38, 39 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hansen as applied to claim 27, and further in view of

WO98/56982 (Jeffrey). It is respectfully submitted that all remaining claims are now allowable over both rejections summarized above.

As explained previously, the amendment to claim 27 is such that claim 27 is now the same as former claim 36 written in independent form. Since the Examiner previously indicated that claim 36 was allowable if presented in independent form, it follows that claim 27 should now be allowed. Claims 28-33, 35 and 38-44 each depend from amended claim 27. Accordingly, each includes the limitations from claim 36, which the Examiner indicated to be allowable. Therefore, Applicant is of the opinion that all claims depending from claim 27 also should now be allowed at least for the reason that each depends from an allowable claim. Applicant further submits that since the claims are allowable for the reason stated above, it is not necessary to discuss the prior art, the Examiner's analysis of the prior art, or the Examiner's application of the prior art to the pending claims. Reconsideration and allowance of all rejected claims are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicant has overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicant hereby conditionally petitions therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on: August 2, 2006.

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